

Abstract of the Invention

A system for forming composite video images from one or more foreground images and one or more background images. In one embodiment, a sum of a suppressed foreground image signal with weight α , with one or more selected foreground colors suppressed, and a background image signal with weight $1-\alpha'$ ($0 \leq \alpha' \leq 1$) is formed, where α and α' may vary from pixel to pixel and with time. In another embodiment, a shadow from a selected foreground image is impressed on selected pixels of a background image. In another embodiment, foreground suppression and shadowing are combined, optionally by retrofitting, using an existing α -mixer or a newly constructed α -mixer. Provision of a chroma key map allows a foreground image shadow to be prescribed pixel by pixel, including a transition region in which the shadowed image slowly disappears.